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INFERENCES IN THE FIRST PERSON

abstract

This paper deals with the experiential basis of deductive reasoning. It concentrates on the case of inferential knowledge in the first person. It first describes the specific kind of entitlement involved in such knowledge. A comparison is then made with inferential knowledge involving other indexical and demonstrative concepts. The entitlement involved in those cases is based on the fact that indexicals such as “here” and “now” are associated with experiential concepts. It is submitted that the concept associated to the expression “I” is an experiential concept application of which presupposes a special sensitivity to the identity of the self through time.

keywords

first person, phenomenology, experience, inferential entitlement

I. Consider an inference in the first person of the form:

- (E) (a) I am *F*.
 (b) I am *G*.
 (c) I am *F* & *G*.

On the face of it, inferences of this form are valid. Indeed, with validity defined in terms of truth-preservation, the premises cannot be true and the conclusion false. This presupposes, however, that the utterer remains the same throughout the inference. Having different occurrences of the same expression “I” does not alone suffice to guarantee this fact. Different persons could use the self same expression.

This point might easily be underestimated. Consider: “All mammals are animals with lungs; all animals with lungs have a heart; so all mammals have a heart”. No presupposition concerning the utterer of the sentences involved in this inference needs to be made in order to state its validity. The inference is valid whoever utters the occurring sentences. It ought not to be so trivial, then, to observe that inferences in the first person presuppose the identity of the utterer. Suppose the subject is considering the following inference:

- (E*) (a) I am *F*
 (b) NN is *G*
 (c) I am *F* & *G*

As John Campbell (Campbell 1994, p. 84) puts it, (E*) is enthymematic, it relies on the suppressed premise “I am NN”. One could suggest that the same applies to (E): it relies on the suppressed premise that the utterer of (Ea) is identical to the utterer of (Eb). Campbell, however, argues that this is wrong, (E) being “valid as it stands” (ibid.) and not enthymematic. It might be noted that the requirement that the utterer remains the same throughout (E) is an immediate consequence of the “I”-rule:

(“I”-rule) Any token of “I” refers to whoever produced it¹.

1 See Campbell 1994, p. 102. Campbell calls it the “token-reflexive rule”.

If (E) is valid only if the expression “I” has the same referent throughout the inference and if occurrences of “I” are governed by the semantic “I”-rule, it follows that (E) is valid if the premises as well as the conclusion are uttered by one and the same person².

This fact alone, however, is not enough to dismiss the charge that (E) is enthymematic. One still needs to ensure that the premises and conclusion are *in fact* uttered by one and the same person. The “I”-rule alone can hardly guarantee this. Of what, then, does the argument for the claim that (E) is not enthymematic comprise? Campbell’s central point is that:

For an argument to be formulated at all, we require a single subject to orchestrate it; we cannot have the various premises and conclusion distributed across different subjects, with no one marshalling them all together. This is true for any inference, not just those involving the first person (Campbell 1994, p. 105).

If correct, this requirement – the *single orchestration requirement* – appears to yield an interesting result for inferences in the first person. We have the following *background argument*: (i) In inferences in the first person, just as in any other inference, the premises and the conclusion must be uttered by one and the same person (*single orchestration requirement*); (ii) The expression “I” occurring in inferences in the first person obeys the “I”-rule, following which any token of “I” refers to its utterer; (iii) Thus: in an inference in the first person the different occurrences of “I” must refer to one and the same person. This appears to establish Campbell’s claim that inferences in the first person are not enthymematic. Given the single orchestration requirement and the “I”-rule as background assumptions, (E) appears to be valid as it stands. (E*), instead, would still remain enthymematic.

Should we accept the single orchestration requirement? I have said above that the evaluation of an inference in general is not relative to the person uttering or, for that matter, entertaining it. Logical relations, such as those established by valid inferences, hold between concepts or propositions, not between events of uttering or, for that matter, events of thinking taking place in some particular mind. The issue at stake does not concern logical validity, however, but the justification of beliefs acquired through inferences that are supposedly valid. In this perspective the questions to be asked are of a different kind. One may wonder, for instance, whether a subject entertaining a valid inference is entitled to its conclusions if she lacks the means to grasp or reflect on its premises. Can a person be considered to have reached a conclusion through an inference if she is not entertaining both the premises and the conclusion? It cannot simply be assumed that the logical possibility to derive q in a valid inference yields an epistemic entitlement to the belief that q .

It is in the light of such considerations that it appears reasonable to propose, as a norm of inferential knowledge, that an argument ought to be “orchestrated” by one and the same person. Even where the conclusion is a valid consequence of the premises, the subject’s entitlement to draw the conclusion might indeed be challenged if premises and conclusion are distributed among different persons. This norm certainly applies to any inference, not only to inferences in the first person.

The single orchestration requirement applies as a general epistemological requirement on inferential knowledge. Applied to inferences in the first person, it yields logical validity, as shown by the background argument mentioned above. With the I-rule being satisfied by the

² In what follows I shall generally consider the relation between utterances. I do think that the issue I am discussing concerns the underlying mental acts of judging, entertaining and inferring just as much as their linguistic manifestation.

utterer, and the orchestration requirement being fulfilled, no shift of reference with respect to the first person can occur. But does fulfilment of these conditions suffice to establish the subject's epistemic entitlement to the conclusion of (E)? The mere fact that satisfaction of epistemic and semantic norms guarantees the validity of an inference does not by itself ground an epistemic entitlement to its conclusion. At least two considerations can be taken to speak against the idea that it does.

A first consideration would insist on the fact that for a subject's behaviour to fulfil a norm, it is not enough for it to correspond to the factual requirements implicated by the norm. As a consequence, one may require that the norm itself plays a role in the explanation of the behaviour. One does not act on a command just by behaving in the way the command would require one to do, one does it by behaving in a certain way *because* it was mandatory to do so. In our case this line of thought would require the explanation of the subject's inferential behaviour to make reference to the orchestration requirement, just as much as her linguistic behaviour is explained by reference to the "I"-rule. If it is appropriate to state that, given the relevant circumstances, the subject uses the expression "I" *in order* to refer to herself, because that is how the "I"-rule says the expression *ought* to be used, then it should also be appropriate to state that the subject utters (or entertains) both the premises and the conclusion, because that is what the orchestration requirement says the subject ought to do in order to infer the conclusion. In order for this pattern of explanation to be applicable, more is required than simply the fact that the subject utters or entertains both premises and conclusions.

The second consideration starts from the observation that even if it is true that an inference in the first person cannot contain any shift of reference when it is entertained by one single person who correctly uses the pronoun "I", that alone does not suffice to show that the subject engaged in such an inference is as such entitled to *assume* that no shift of reference has occurred. An *independent* entitlement to such an assumption might be required for the subject's conclusion to be properly justified by the premises. The determination of the conditions under which such an entitlement can be earned would be an essential part of a proper account of inferential knowledge in the first person³.

The requirement for an independent entitlement to the assumption might be challenged on grounds analogous to those one can find in other epistemological contexts. For a perceptual belief to be warranted, for instance, relevant enabling conditions must be satisfied⁴. It is sometimes denied that perceptual warrant depends on an entitlement to the assumption that the enabling conditions obtain. The assumption, it is said, is something for which the subject might simply not be in a position to earn an independent entitlement. In our context, this would mean that the subject's drawing of the conclusion would be warranted even if no entitlement were at her disposal for the assumption that she was in fact responsible for the uttering, or the entertaining, of the premises.

The fact alone that one is not in a position to earn an independent entitlement to an assumption that plays the function of an enabling condition for an epistemic project one is engaged in cannot ground the dispensability of the entitlement. A number of further conditions must be met. It must be ruled out, for instance, that the local incapacity is the manifestation of a more general cognitive insufficiency. The dispensability might also be

³ We are confronted with a triad composed of: (I) I am F & I am G; (II) I am F & G; (III) The different occurrences of the expression "I" in (I) and (II) refer to the same subject. As with other I-II-III cases, (I) provides evidence for (II) only if (III) obtains. Even if (III) is implied by (I) and (II), warrant for (III) cannot be obtained uniquely by logical implication. One is expected to earn an independent warrant for it.

⁴ Those conditions typically refer to external and internal conditions, such as light conditions and the functioning of the perceptual system.

withdrawn by virtue of the fact that the subject has available evidence showing that the assumption does not hold. Suppose, in our case, that although satisfying the I-rule and the orchestration requirement, the subject engaged in (E) associates different concepts to the different occurrences of “I”. In that case the subject would need further warrant for the premise that the different concepts do in fact have the same extension.

Campbell appears to think that the situation to which I appealed is not possible. In reference to the “I”-rule, he writes:

The fact that two tokens are governed by this rule and the fact that they were produced by one and the same person are enough to guarantee that inferences by this person that trade on the identity of reference are legitimate. There is no possibility of a person referring to himself twice using the first person but associating different senses with it on both occasions (ibid., p. 102).

In Campbell’s terminology, an inference “trades on the identity” of two terms when it is not necessary to add the identity statement as a further premise. It is true, as we have seen, that (E) is logically valid by virtue of the satisfaction of the single orchestration requirement together with the “I”-rule. Nevertheless, this does not by itself imply that (E) could not involve different concepts <I>. All the “I”-rule says is that any token of “I” refers to its utterer, not that it refers *in the same way* to the same utterer. Unless one can prove this further claim, the second sentence in Campbell’s quotation cannot be accepted.

The argument can be illustrated with the help of an example. Consider the following inference:

- (F) (a) The utterer of (Fa) is *F*.
 (b) The utterer of (Fb) is *G*.
 (c) The utterer of (Fc) is *F* and *G*.

The single orchestration requirement suffices to make (F) valid: it establishes the identity of the utterers and thus the fact that all the left-hand expressions refer to one and the same entity. Yet the expressions “The utterer of (Fa)”, “The utterer of (Fb)”, and “The utterer of (Fc)” do not express the same concept. Witness the following inference:

- (G) (a) The utterer of (Fa) is *F*.
 (b) The utterer of (Fb) is *G*.
 (c) The utterer of (Fc) is *F* and *G*.

(F) and (G) contain utterances of the same sentences, which express the same concepts. Yet (F), and not (G), is valid simply by virtue of the fact that it is entertained by one and the same subject. Hence, the mere fact that fulfilment of the single orchestration requirement suffices to guarantee the validity of an inference does not imply the identity of the concepts. Campbell may certainly object that neither the utterances in (F), nor those in (G), satisfy the “I”-rule. His claim, remember, is that fulfilment of the orchestration requirement, *together* with the application of the “I”-rule, is all one needs to make (E) both logically valid and epistemologically sound. But this does not really advance the argument, unless it is *assumed* that the concept associated to any utterance of “I” is exhaustively determined by the “I”-rule. But this, as we shall now see, cannot be assumed.

II. Compare (E) with the following inference:

- (S) (a) Here it is *F*.
 (b) Here it is *G*.
 (c) So here it is *F* and *G*.

This inference is valid only if “here” always refers to the same place. The expression “here”, it may now be argued, is governed by the “*Here*”-rule, which states that any token of “here” refers to the place where its utterer is. Given the “*Here*”-rule, the inference is both valid and non-enthymematic if premises and conclusion are uttered by one and the same person – so long as that person does not move⁵. We may call this the *immobility requirement*. Contrary to the single orchestration requirement, the immobility requirement can hardly be considered a background assumption for *all* inferences. Inferences do not generally involve any restriction as far as the mobility of the subject uttering or entertaining them is concerned. The restriction should have something to do with the specific nature of egocentric spatial concepts such as <here>, <there>, <up>, <down>, etc.

Similar considerations apply to inferences involving temporal indexicals. Consider:

- (T) (a) It is *F* now [uttered in t_1]
 (b) It is *G* now [uttered in t_2]
 (c) It is *F* and *G* now [uttered in t_3]

Occurrences of “now” obey the “now”-rule, which says that any occurrence of “now” refers to the time at which it was uttered. In order for T to be valid, however, the different occurrences of “now” in (T) need also to refer to the same moment, or to a singular temporal interval going at least from t_1 to t_3 ⁶. Parallel to the orchestration requirement and to the immobility requirement, a *simultaneity requirement* would be required. Again, this requirement does not constitute a background assumption for all cases of inferential knowledge. The restriction has something to do with egocentric temporal concepts such as <now>, <yesterday> and <in five minutes>. The immobility requirement and the simultaneity requirement are related, I shall now argue, to the *experiential* nature of the concepts involved in inferences such as (S) and (T). Concepts are experiential in the sense I am considering, when they refer to properties whose nature is such that there are conditions under which they cannot fail to be given in experience. This yields a twofold constraint. One constraint concerns the nature of the properties under consideration. The other constraint concerns the possession conditions of the concepts themselves. Consider for instance perceptual concepts such as <red>, <hot> and <sweet>. Such concepts refer to properties a subject cannot fail to perceive under normal conditions. It cannot be the case that an apple is red, that the conditions are normal, that a subject is appropriately related to the apple, and that the apple fails to appear red to the subject. In this sense, the property of being red is constitutively experiential: it cannot be instantiated under normal conditions in a way that would prevent it from being given in experience. But the concept <red> is also such that for a subject to possess it, she must have the capacity to apply it on the basis of something appearing red to her. If something appears red to her under normal

⁵ There is room for some vagueness: the portion of space referred to by “here” depends in part on the predicates involved. In “there is an insect here” and “it is summer here” different portions of space are meant by “here”.

⁶ There arguably is vagueness with respect to our common usage of “now” just as much as with respect to “here”. In “it is cold now” and “now it is twelve o’clock” different lapses of time are meant by “now”.

conditions and she still does not know which concept she ought to apply, then she lacks full mastery of the concept⁷.

The concepts “now” and “here” are experiential in so far as they refer to properties that are normally given in one’s experience of time and space, and that one needs to be able to apply them on the basis of such experiences in order to possess them. A number of considerations speak in favour of this claim. Suppose a subject knows that by using the expression “now” she refers to the moment of her utterance, but that she lacks any sense for the passage of time. She may have the concepts of earlier and later as ordering moments in time, but she has no sense of past, present and future. She may know that now is later than yesterday and earlier than tomorrow, but she does not experience time as having passed since yesterday. Nor does she ever experience time as passing. She cannot, on the basis of the simple fact that time passes, order two instances of “now” in earlier in later. She would need to rely on some measuring instrument giving her access to the ordering of all the moments she refers to by using “now”. Similarly, she does not experience two lapses of time as involving different durations, one longer than the other. She would again have to rely on some instrument in order to assess the difference between the length of the two durations. Such a person would not have access to experiential temporal properties, and she would not be in a position to apply concepts such as <now>, <past>, <future> and <lasts longer than> on the basis of her experience. She would not have full mastery of those concepts.

In order to acquire the appropriate entitlement to the conclusion of an argument that is subject to the simultaneity requirement, one needs more than simple mastery of the “now”-rule and accidental satisfaction of the simultaneity requirement. One further needs to experience time as passing and events as having a duration. Suppose, for instance, that the subject intends to engage in an inference like the following:

- | | | | |
|------|-----|---|---------------------|
| (T*) | (a) | It is the 1 st of August 2004 now; | [uttered in t_1] |
| | (b) | John sings now; | [uttered in t_2] |
| | (c) | John sings on the 1 st of August 2004. | [uttered in t_3] |

(T*c) not containing any token of “now”, only the interval between t_1 and t_2 is relevant. The subject needs to be able to set the interval under consideration in a way such that it does not extend from one day to the following. This surely involves more than simply applying the “now-rule”. It involves, for instance, a sense for the length of a temporal duration. Under normal conditions, the time passed from the first to the second premise is not extended enough to involve a passage from one day to the following. This would ground a normal capacity to satisfy the simultaneity requirement. A subject with no sense for the passage of time, however, could not be credited with any such ground. Unless she collects further information, she would satisfy the requirement out of sheer luck.

Similar considerations apply to the capacity to experience oneself as located in space. It is not enough to master the “here”-rule and to accidentally satisfy the immobility requirement in order to earn a proper entitlement to the conclusion of an argument of the form (S). One further needs to be able to experience oneself as moving in space in a way that is relevant for the validity of the inference. Walking on *Unter den Linden* one may safely move from “here it is Berlin” and “here people speak German” to the conclusion “people speak German in Berlin”

⁷ More about the nature of such experiential concepts in (Soldati *forthcoming*). For recent work on the matter see (Eilan 2011) and (Eilan 2014), where it is pointed out that the properties under consideration might very well be objective in spite of them being experiential.

– if one has a sense of how one’s changing position locates oneself in objective space. With no such experiential capacity, the conclusion, even if valid, would be unwarranted. Analogous considerations, I should now wish to argue, apply to the concept <I>. The connection between the single orchestration requirement and the possession conditions of the concept <I> appear less evident than the connection between the immobility requirement and the possession conditions of the concept <here>, or between the simultaneity requirement and the concept <now>, as the former is more general: it applies to all inferences, not just to inferences in the first person. However, this can also be understood as a symptom of the fact that *every* inference presupposes possession of the concept <I> and thus some sort of self-knowledge. For a subject to engage in deductive reasoning, she must be sensitive to the fact that it is her, in the first person, who entertains the premises as well as the conclusion. She must be able to realise that the different premises and the conclusion are not distributed among different persons. She must be sensitive to the fact that she satisfies the single orchestration requirement, if such is the case. This is indeed one of the many perspectives that illustrates the intimate connection between rationality and self-knowledge.

- III. One might be tempted to compare inferences in the first person to demonstrative inferences, assuming that one experiences oneself in thought in a way that bears relevant similarities with the way one experiences an abiding object in inferences involving perceptual demonstratives. There are indeed similarities, but there are also important differences, that finally boil down to the fact that the demonstrative relation to oneself is not the fundamental capacity that is required for inferences in the first person. Let us look at some details. Consider:

- (D) (a) This building is *F*.
 (b) This building is *G*.
 (c) This building is *F* and *G*.

One might suggest that usage of demonstratives has to satisfy a rule (the “that”-rule), which establishes that they refer to the entity the perceptual state governing their usage is about. Suppose one and the same subject entertains (D). It is obviously possible that the entity to which the subject is demonstratively referring has been exchanged between (Da) and (Db) without the subject being aware of it. So, one might argue, neither application of the “that”-rule nor satisfaction of the orchestration requirement, prevent (D) from being enthymematic. (D), it might be held, requires the added premise that the referent of the demonstrative in (Da) is identical to the referent of the demonstrative in (Db).

This would be misleading. As Campbell himself points out⁸, demonstrative inferences such as (D) are not enthymematic, because the perceptual representations governing the demonstrative thoughts expressed by the different utterances occurring in (D) are directly related to each other, without the mediation of any judgement. When one perceives an object, one does not keep on *judging* that the object remains the same, even if the object could have been exchanged without the subject noticing it. Rather, the subsequent perceptual states are intimately related to each other by a net of expectations and fulfilments. Singular, static perceptions are abstractions from this dynamic process rather than perceptual atoms that would need to be related with each other by an act of judging. Demonstrative inferences such as (D) are not enthymematic because the perceptions governing the demonstratives occurring

⁸ Campbell 1994, p. 86.

in them are not punctual and static, but complex and dynamic. Demonstrative inferences are not enthymematic because of the nature of the perceptual experience they are based on. Naturally, it is possible that a shift of reference occurs between the first and the second demonstrative premise without the subject noticing it. The issue here is not that this is not possible. The point is that as our perception is dynamic, if something like the above occurs, the subject cannot be said to have based her argument on a wrong assumption. The subject would have to make an assumption concerning the identity of the referents if the perceptions were punctual and static: the assumption would turn out to be false, if an unnoticed reference shift had occurred. Since the subject is not making that sort of assumption, the possibility for her making such a mistake does not arise. It is by virtue of the nature of the perceptual experience grounding the demonstrative inference that the subject can acquire inferential knowledge without any entitlement concerning the identity of the referents.

It is often argued that there is no specific perceptual access, be it internal (proprioceptive or introspective) or external (perceptual), to the self. More specifically, it is suggested that contrary to perceptual tracking, which provides the basis for demonstrative inferences, there is no tracking of the self in inferences in the first person. Yet it appears that one can construct cases of reference shift in inferences in the first person that are not unlike the sort of reference shift described above with respect to demonstrative inferences. If not some sort of tracking, what, then, would prevent us from claiming that those inferences are enthymematic?

The cases I have in mind are artificial but logically possible cases of memory transplantation. In order to describe such a case, we have to add to our inference (E) some temporal indexes, thus:

- | | | | |
|-----|-----|----------------------------|-------------|
| (E) | (a) | I am <i>F</i> . | [in t_1] |
| | (b) | I am <i>G</i> . | [in t_2] |
| | (c) | I am <i>F</i> & <i>G</i> . | [in t_3] |

Notice that these indexes are not part of the truth-conditions associated with the beliefs expressed by those utterances. They index episodic beliefs (acts of judging), or utterances used in order to express them, and not what those beliefs are about, not the propositions they are associated with. It might be useful for this purpose to assume *F* and *G* to be a-temporal properties, such as *being the first son of X and Y* or *having been born on the 14th of July*, rather than *being hungry* or *just having fallen asleep*. Suppose now that A has a belief she would express by (Ea) in t_1 , that B has a belief she would express by (Eb) in t_2 and suppose further that A's memory has been transplanted into B's brain at a moment t_j between t_1 and t_2 . B will thus feel compelled to accept (Ec) in t_3 . If memory transplantation is possible, it appears that this is a coherent description of the situation.

Let us further suppose that B is not *F*. The conclusion would thus be false. Is it false because in the first premise B attributes to herself a property she does not have, or is it false because the referent of the first premise is not the same as the referent of the second? In the first case, there is nothing wrong with the inference itself, it simply contains a false premise that leads to a false conclusion. In the second case, on the other hand, there is something wrong with the inference itself, it contains a shift of reference. One could repair the inference by adding the further premise that the referent of "I" in (Ea) is identical to the referent of "I" in (Eb). The inference would then be in order and the conclusion would be false simply because the supplementary premise is false, even though (Ea) is true.

Campbell opts for the first solution. He writes: "When the second person acquires the seeming memory, he simply acquires a false belief about what he himself did. At no point does he

have to keep track of who is in question; at no point does he lose track of who is in question” (Campbell 1994, p. 99). Campbell imagines that when she draws the conclusion (Ec), B does not rely on A’s belief expressed by (Ea), but on some belief acquired via the seeming memory at the time t_j between t_1 and t_2 . Suppose, then, that B has a belief in t_j she would express by:

(Ea*) I am F. [in t_j]

(Ea) and (Ea*) are different tokens used to express different judgements that occur in different minds. The false premise (Ea*) leads, together with (Eb), to the false conclusion (Ec) without any shift of reference. The inference leads to a false conclusion because it contains a false premise, not because it contains an unnoticed reference shift.

Surely the inference with (Ea*) as a premise instead of (Ea) is *not* the inference we started out from. At no time did we assume that B had the false belief expressed by (Ea*). What reason is there to say that what motivates B in her conclusion must be the belief expressed by (Ea*) and not the belief expressed by (Ea)? Does one always need to introduce a new belief based on the memory of one’s premises before moving to the conclusion? If inferences in this sense have a temporal structure, if there is a temporal succession between the different beliefs expressed in the premises and, in turn, between the premises and the conclusion, we would end up in a regress. We would need to recollect the memories, and the memories of the memories, and so on, without ever being entitled to move on to the conclusion. So, together with (Eb), if the belief expressed by (Ea*) is sufficient to motivate B’s conclusion, it is hard to see why the belief expressed in (Ea) would be insufficient.

- IV. Under certain conditions a subject can entertain an inference in the first person that involves a reference shift. This is one possible reason why an inference in the first person might lead to a false conclusion. In this sense there is no asymmetry between inferences in the first person and demonstrative inferences. It is often argued, as I said above, that there is a clear difference in so far as inferences in the first person are not based on the sort of dynamic perception on which demonstrative inferences rely. There is no way the subject is given to himself which could be compared to the way the objects of his demonstrative beliefs are given to him in perception. If the sort of reference shift mentioned above were really possible, it is said, inferences in the first person would necessarily be enthymematic: they would need a further premise which establishes the identity of the referents throughout the inference.

One may be tempted to reply to this objection by pointing out that we can make demonstrative reference to ourselves, from outside, as it were, on the basis of our external senses. This would be a non-starter, however. In external perception one perceives oneself as an object and not, as it is sometimes said, *qua* subject. In our specific case this difference would manifest itself by the fact that one would need a further premise in order to establish the identity of the subject the inference in the first person refers to with the person one’s perception is about. This would also make inferences in the first person enthymematic. What we need is that the subject be aware of herself as the subject of different beliefs involved in an inference in the first person without having to *judge* that those beliefs, or the utterances expressing them, refer to one and the same subject.

Quassim Cassam has suggested that in bodily awareness we experience our body as being at the centre of egocentric space and that to experience an entity in such a position is, given the spatial content of some of our mental properties, to experience it *qua* subject: “[T]he physical entity that is the zero point of spatial perception presents itself as being a point of occupancy for psychological properties. For example, the physical entity that is at the point of origin of egocentric space is also one in which sensations such as pain present themselves as located;

in this sense, it presents itself as ‘a bearer of sensations’” (Cassam 1997, p. 57). Cassam’s idea is that we not only experience our body as being located at the centre of the egocentric space which characterises the spatial content of perceptual as well as proprioceptive representations, but that we also experience it as the entity in which experiences such as pain are located.

Now, we do not normally experience mental states such as pains as being located in some alien entity we would have to identify with ourselves. Pain is here, where *we* are, at the centre of *our* egocentric space. This is where our body is. So, when we experience our pain both as being located in our body and at the place where we are, we experience our body as the bearer of that pain. In so far as we are aware of our body as the bearer of mental properties, we are aware of it *qua* subject. Pain, it might now be added, no less than external perception, is not punctual and static, but complex and dynamic. When one experiences a worsening pain, a pain moving along one’s limb, one does not keep on *judging* that the subject of the pain remains the same. Rather, the subsequent sensations are intimately related to each other by a net of expectations and fulfilments. Singular, static pains are abstractions from this dynamic process rather than sensational atoms needing to be related to each other by an act of judging.

If inferences were a succession of pains, this argument would suffice to dismiss the charge that they are enthymematic. For different pains to be experienced as belonging to the same subject one would not need to judge that their bearer is one and the same. The sort of reference shift imagined above would still be possible. If the subject were somehow connected to somebody else’s body, the pain could migrate, as it were, from one body to the other. However, since the subject undergoing the pain would not be required to *judge* that the bearer of the pains remains the same, there would be no premise in the argument to be falsified.

Inferences in the psychological sense, however, are a succession of beliefs, not of pains. We do not experience beliefs as located in our body. Unlike pain, we do not experience belief as being located in a particular place. Although it makes sense to ask where a pain is, it hardly makes sense to ask where a belief is. It thus appears that we cannot move from the fact that one experiences certain beliefs to the claim that one is thereby aware of oneself as the abiding bearer of those beliefs. As Cassam points out, however, “... in ordinary self-awareness, one is aware of one’s thoughts, sensations, and perceptions as belonging to one and the same self” (*ibid.*, p. 76). Although one is not aware of oneself as the abiding bearer of one’s beliefs by just experiencing them, one does experience one’s beliefs as belonging to the very subject to which one’s pains, perceptions and hopes belong. This appears to be the phenomenological basis for the fact that we experience the beliefs involved in an inference as belonging to one and the same person, the person we think about under the concept <self>. We do not *judge* that it is one and the same person, we experience it, just as much as we experience the fact that we satisfy the immobility requirement without having to judge that we did not move and that we can make a demonstrative inference without having to judge that we keep referring to the same thing. Since they do not presuppose that the subject judges that she remains the same, inferences in the first person are not enthymematic. The entitlement to the conclusion, however, depends on her experience of herself as an abiding subject of a net of experience.

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